# IMMEDIATE EMANCIPATION:

THE

## ONLY WISE AND SAFE MODE.

THE people of the Northern States of this country are now nearly unanimous in the belief that the present war, begun by the South to perpetuate the claim that it is right to hold property in man, will not end until the cause of the war — Slavery — is swept away by the emancipation of the slaves. They believe that this will be the inevitable result. But few comparatively see at present that the only wise, safe, just, and effectual mode is immediate emancipation on the soil.

The object of this pamphlet is to demonstrate the feasibleness, utility, justice, and safety of this measure now forced upon the consideration of the people of the free States by the audacity, madness, and fury of the traitors who have precipitated the South into rebellion and civil war with the people of the North.

It is an incontrovertible fact that immediate emancipation, under present circumstances, is a constitutional measure. Whatever difference of opinion might have existed

before the present war, between the advocates and opposers of it, it is now as clear as noon-day, that under the war power, emancipation—immediate emancipation—is justifiable and lawful. During the celebrated debate on the slave question, in the House of Representatives, April 14 and 15, 1842, the Hon. John Quincy Adams declared that in case of actual invasion, or actual war, "whether servile, civil or foreign, not only the President of the United States, but the commander of the army, has power to order the universal emancipation of the slaves." This announcement fell upon the ears of the slaveholding members with about as much astonishment and consternation as if a shell had been thrown into the House from some neighboring fortress. Mr. Adams, however, calmly reïterated the assertion, declared that it was in consonance with the Law of Nations, and challenged a refutation of his assertion. No one attempted to controvert it. Recently, his speech has been published in nearly all the daily press of this city, and by numerous papers throughout the country, without any one venturing to call in question the truthfulness of the declaration of the sage of Quincy, the old man eloquent, the patriot and statesman of old Massachusetts and of the whole country.

It being certain, then, that immediate emancipation is a right incidental to the war power, the first inquiry is this: Is it a wise and prudent and safe measure?

It would be safe to assume the rightfulness and safety of immediate emancipation, from the consideration that slavery is a sin against God and a crime against man. There are but few, very few, who, in the light of this unprovoked and aggressive war, begun by the South and carried on to establish slavery as a national institution, will venture to

deny the sinfulness and criminality of the practice. Slavery is wrong, and Freedom is right. It is safe to renounce what is wrong, and to practice what is right. There is no danger in it, in theory or practice. But we will not enlarge upon this *à priori* argument, for we wish to convince the whole people, and not argue the point merely as a moral question.

Can it be shown, then, that the immediate emancipation of the four millions of slaves in this country would be a safe and wise measure? That is the question. But this is not the whole of it. Is it wise and safe to emancipate them upon the soil? That is the only emancipation we contend for, having no belief in the safety or wisdom of emancipation with expatriation.

We argue that immediate emancipation *upon the soil* is the only safe and prudent course, from the following considerations. 1. The negroes are needed at the South, and they would be contented to remain there. White men, whether from the North or from Europe, can not fill their place, and perform the labor that black men can perform on many of the Southern plantations. The reasons are obvious to all intelligent readers. 2. The slaves are unfitted, by education and habits, to sustain, successfully and advantageously, a new empire should they be removed, as some have advocated, to Central America or elsewhere. 3. Such a body of men, women and childen could not be removed and planted in a new region. It is physically impossible. It would require a succession of miracles to sustain them, as the Israelites were upheld and protected by their Great Deliverer, during their flight from Egypt, their passage through the Red Sea, and their forty years' pilgrimage in the deserts of Arabia.

Suppose that the three hundred thousand slaveholders in the United States had, five years since, given freedom to all the slaves in this country, and that the Legislatures of the Slave States had, by a suitable code of laws, provided for such a state of things, securing the masters from injury, and the emancipated from oppression, leaving it to the parties to make their own contracts for labor and its remuneration; preventing vagrancy; assuring to the laborers the rewards of industry; providing for the education of the young; and, in all suitable ways, protecting the people, employers and employees, and their dependents, in their rights—who doubts, in the light of what has been achieved by similar regulations in the British and French islands, in the light of common-sense, and in view of the natural operation of just and humane laws, that both the late masters and the late slaves, nay, the whole community, would, by this time, have been in a well-regulated, peaceful, and prosperous condition — servants being obedient to their masters or employers, and the masters or employers giving to their servants that which is just and equal?

2. Human nature is the same every where, and there is sufficient analogy between the slavery that existed in the British West-Indies, and the slavery that exists in this country, to show that if immediate emancipation has been found safe and wise in Jamaica, Antigua, and other islands, the same measure would be wise and safe in the United States. This is evident and the proofs are abundant. It was a long time before England ventured upon the experiment. It was thought there, as it has been here, that gradual abolition was the only feasible and safe measure. At length a pamphlet was written by Elizabeth Heyrick, a Quakeress of Leicester, entitled, "Immediate, not Gradual

Abolition; or, an Inquiry into the shortest, safest, and most effectual means of getting rid of West-Indian Slavery." This was in 1824. The persuasive appeals and powerful arguments of the writer had great influence in England.

It is said that WILBERFORCE, on perusing the essay, exclaimed, in the spirit of the Grecian philosopher, on discovering the solution of a problem in the natural sciences: "I have found it!" Henceforth both Wilberforce and his able philanthropic coädjutors devoted themselves to the work of convincing the British people that *immediate* emancipation was not only safe and practicable, but the only way to bring about peaceable emancipation. They enlisted Pitt, Fox, and other statesmen in this moral enterprise, and finally secured the passage of the celebrated EMANCIPATION ACT, by which eight hundred thousand blacks were emancipated—"set loose on the community," as the phrase is; an Act that, with its subsequent modifications, notwithstanding the prognostications of croakers, and the determination of many not to recognize facts illustrating its benefits, stands out before the world as, in its main features, one of the sublimest and most beneficial enactments that ever proceeded from any legislature or government.

3. Let us look now at the workings of immediate emancipation in the West-Indies. If it worked well there, it would work well here. That it has worked well there, we have abundant testimony. Those who will not believe it, on the evidence to be produced, are blinded by passion, self-interest, or a partial view of things. We have heard of an old woman in Albany county, who would not believe until her dying day that General Burgoyne had been taken by the American army. Prejudice with her was, as it is

with others, invincible. But we appeal to wise men; and say to them: "Judge ye what we say."

The British Emancipation Act provided for the full emancipation of the slaves after four years' probation, or what was termed the "apprenticeship system." Parliament at the time was averse to the abolition of slavery at once, believing that the slaves must be prepared for freedom. In this they were mistaken, as facts have shown. Antigua rejected the apprenticeship system, preferring immediate emancipation. Experience satisfied the British government that the apprenticeship system was unwise, and attended with injury to all parties. Full emancipation took place to the joy and satisfaction of a large majority of the late masters, and to the people of England. Messrs. James A. Thome of Kentucky, and I. Horace Kimball of New-Hampshire, visited the British West-Indies in 1837, and published the result of their inquiries and observations. We shall make some extracts from their interesting publication.

Said Mr. Barnard, of Green Castle estate, Antigua: "Emancipation was preferred to apprenticeship, because it was attended with less trouble, and left the planters independent, instead of being saddled with a legion of stipendiary magistrates."

Said Dr. Daniell, member of the Council, and proprietor: "The apprenticeship was rejected by us solely from motives of policy."

Said Hon. N. Nugent: "We wished to let ourselves down in the easiest manner possible; *therefore* we chose immediate freedom in preference to the apprenticeship."

David Cranstown, Esq., colonial magistrate and planter, said: "Emancipation was preferred to apprenticeship, because of the inevitable and endless perplexities connected with the latter system."

The following testimony is extracted from a letter from a highly respectable merchant of St. John's, a gentleman of long experience on the island, and agent for several estates: "Emancipation was an act of mere policy, adopted as *the safest and most economic* measure."

Mr. Nugent, speaker of the Assembly at the time of emancipation, remarked: "A strong conviction existed that from peculiarity of climate and soil, the physical wants and necessities of the peasantry would compel them to labor for their subsistence, to seek employment and wages from the proprietors of the soil; and if the *transformation* could be safely and quietly brought about, that the *free system* might be cheaper and more profitable than the other."

Antigua, that contained about 35,000 inhabitants, of whom 30,000 were slaves, rejected the apprenticeship, and concluded to have immediate emancipation, which took place August 1st, 1834. The event passed peaceably, although gloomy apprehensions were entertained by some of the planters, and notwithstanding several *American* vessels, which had lain for weeks in the harbor, weighed anchor on the 31st of July, and made their escape, through actual fear that the island would be destroyed on the following day!

Said R. B. Eldridge, Esq., after speaking of the number emancipated: "Yet this vast body (30,000) *glided* out of slavery into freedom with the utmost tranquillity."

Said Hon. N. Nugent: "Nothing could surpass the universal propriety of the negroes' conduct on the first of August, 1834. Never was there a more beautiful and interesting spectacle exhibited, than on that occasion."

There has been since emancipation, not only no rebellion in fact, but no fear of it in Antigua. The militia were not

called out even during Christmas holidays. Before emancipation, martial law invariably prevailed on the holidays, but the very first Christmas after emancipation, the Governor issued a proclamation, stating that *in consequence of the abolition of slavery*, it was no longer necessary to resort to such a precaution.

S. Bourne, Esq., said: "Previous to emancipation, many persons apprehended violence and bloodshed as the consequence of turning the slaves all loose; but when emancipation took place, all these apprehensions vanished. The sense of personal security is universal. We know not of a single instance in which the negroes have exhibited a *revengeful spirit.*"

Dr. Ferguson said: "It has always appeared to me self-evident, that if a man is peaceable while a *slave*, he will be so when a *free man.*"

Dr. Daniell, proprietor, remarked: "There has been no instance of personal violence since freedom. Some persons pretended, prior to emancipation, to apprehend disastrous results; but for my part, I can not say that I ever entertained such fears. I could not see any thing which was to instigate negroes to rebellion, *after* they had obtained their liberty. I have not heard of a single case of even *meditated* revenge."

Mr. Favey, manager of Lavicount's, said: "One of the blessings of emancipation has been, that it has banished the *fear* of insurrections, incendiarism," etc.

Rev. Mr. Merrick, Moravian Missionary, said: "In my extensive intercourse with the people, as missionary, I have never heard of an instance of violence or revenge on the part of the negroes, even where they had been ill-treated during slavery."

Mr. Nugent said: "There is not the slightest feeling of insecurity—quite the contrary. Property is more secure, *for all idea of insurrection is abolished forever.*"

Dr. Ferguson remarked: "Emancipation is working most admirably, especially for the planters. It is infinitely better policy than slavery or the apprenticeship either."

Mr. Hatley, manager of Fry's estate, said that the expenses on his estate had been greatly reduced since emancipation.

The negroes worked more cheerfully, and did their work better than they did during slavery. Wages were found to be an ample substitute for the lash.

The negroes have been more easily managed as freemen than they were when slaves. The Governor said: "The negroes are as a race remarkable for *docility;* they are easily controlled by kind influence. It is only necessary to gain their confidence, and you can sway them as you please."

After the foregoing facts and evidences, we ask, what becomes of the dogma, that slaves can not be immediately emancipated and placed under the government of *equitable laws* with safety to themselves and the community?

It was the testimony of the most respectable inhabitants that emancipation had not produced insolence on the part of the negroes. Emancipation had also demonstrated that gratitude is a prominent trait of the negro character. It was abundantly proved also that the emancipated are able and willing to take care of themselves, their children, their aged parents, and their helpless friends.

The capabilities of the blacks for education are conspicuous; so also as to mental acquirements and trades. The negroes manifested a growing self-respect and regard for

character. This was a feeling which was scarcely known by them during slavery. Emancipation, as might have been supposed, has produced a vast improvement in the condition of woman. Real estate has risen in value; mercantile and mechanical occupations have received a fresh impulse: and the general condition of the colony is decidedly more flourishing than at any former period.

D Cranstown, Esq., said: "I do not know of a single planter who would be willing to return to slavery. We all feel that it was a great curse."

At Barbadoes our travelers were told that "emancipation is as great a blessing to the master as to the slave." The testimony of special magistrates, police officers, clergymen, and missionaries, uniformly corroborated the statements made elsewhere of the beneficial results of the Emancipation Act.

Messrs. Thome and Kimball learned in Jamaica that, although many of the planters were not so favorably impressed touching the results of emancipation as were the planters in the other islands, yet that the missionaries, as a body, a portion of the special magistrates, and most of the intelligent free colored people, anticipated glorious consequences. Experience, since that period, has satisfied the great body of the people in Jamaica that emancipation was a merciful, wise, and beneficial act; that notwithstanding non-resident proprietors have suffered more or less, the general welfare of the people has been promoted; and that, if the planters and government had judiciously coöperated in extending to the emancipated the blessings naturally resulting from freedom in securing a fair remuneration for labor, and promoting education, agriculture, etc., the prosperity of the island would have been far greater than it now is, and the clamors

of disappointed planters and mortgagees been very much lessened.

Sir Lionel Smith, Governor-General of Jamaica, in his dispatch to Lord Glenelg, dated August 13, 1838, said: 'The vast population of negroes on this island came into the full enjoyment of freedom on the 1st of August. The day was observed by proclamation as one of thanksgiving and prayer, and it is quite impossible for me to do justice to the good order, decorum, and gratitude which the whole of the laboring population manifested on the happy occasion. Not even the irregularity of a drunken individual occurred."

The most recent and most authentic intelligence from Jamaica furnishes ample, unimpeachable, and demonstrative testimony that emancipation has proved an immense blessing to all parties concerned.

Rev. Henry Bleby, of Barbadoes, delivered a speech in Massachusetts, July 31st, 1858, in which he said: "I have been told, since I have been here, that emancipation, it is understood, has been a failure. I am prepared to give this statement an unqualified contradiction. There is no sense whatever in which the emancipation of the slaves of the British colonies has proved a failure. . . Throughout the British West-Indies, in every island, the condition of the people is incomparably superior in all respects to what it was in slavery. Then, I am told, if it has not ruined the laborer, it has ruined the planter; sir, I deny that as plainly as I deny the other. . . It was not emancipation, but slavery, that ruined those who were ruined. They were ruined long before emancipation took place. . . Long before Buxton and Wilberforce lifted their voices in the British Senate to advocate the emancipation of the negroes, the colonists throughout the West-Indies continually complained that they were ruined."

Mr. Charles Tappan, of Boston, who visited Barbadoes, St. Thomas, and Jamaica not long since, and who brought home the written testimony of governors, judges, ministers, laymen, with respect to the beneficial workings of emancipation, says in his report that has been published in several of the newspapers: "The alleged want of labor is a false cry. . . . Where labor is said to be deficient, it can be traced to causes within the planter's control to remove. Of these, insufficient wages, unpunctual payment of the same, or no payment at all, are stated to be the chief. . . The allegations of idleness and immorality, which have been propagated by the London *Times*, are indignantly repudiated as gross calumnies, and the writers are challenged to produce the proof of their reckless statements."

Mr. Tappan says further: "As now advised, it seems to me that lands are worth twice as much as under the curse of slavery. A plantation of 448 acres has just been bought for £40,000, which, I am informed, could not have been sold before emancipation, with all the negroes on it, for half that sum. . . A white planter informed me that he did not know a planter who would return to slavery if he could; and I find that the opinion of every one."

John Bigelow, Esq., late one of the editors of the New-York *Evening Post*, in his "Jamaica in 1850," published after his visit to the West-Indies, says: "I am clear that if Jamaica was an American State, she would speedily be more productive and valuable than any agricultural portion of the United States of the same dimensions, and that neither the Emancipation Bill of '33, nor the Sugar Duties Bill of '46, are fatal obstacles to a prosperity far exceeding any thing which Jamaica has ever known."

Governor Hincks, late Governor of Barbadoes, has given

his written testimony respecting the benefits of emancipation, the good conduct of the emancipated, and the general prosperity of the island, that fully corroborates all that has been said in these pages, which testimony has been extensively published in our newspapers.

Mr. William G. Sewell has published a book entitled, "The Ordeal of Free Labor in the British West-Indies." It is composed of Letters originally written for the New-York *Times*. Mr. Sewell visited the Islands, examined into the experiences of free and slave labor, their social distinctions, their commerce and prosperity, and has presented a commercial view of their past and present condition. He avers that "the commerce of Barbadoes is much more extensive and much more flourishing under free labor than it was under slave labor."

Of Antigua, Mr. Sewell says: "She refused to believe in the virtues of an apprenticeship, or in the doctrine that her bondmen needed a purgatory to prepare them for freedom. If they were to be liberated, why not at once, and escape the vexation, the heart-burnings, and the suspense of a wretched ordeal? This was her argument, and in 1834 Antigua became a perfectly free colony. Her rulers were wise in their generation. . . . Antigua has never had any cause to regret the independent course that she then thought proper to pursue."

Mr. Sewell remarks: "I came to the West-Indies imbued with the American idea that African freedom had been a curse to every branch of agricultural and commercial industry. I shall leave these islands overwhelmed with a very opposite conviction." Speaking of Jamaica, he says: "I hope to be able to show to others as plainly as the conviction has come home to myself, that disaster and misfortune have followed — not emancipation — but the failure to ob-

serve those great principles of liberty and justice upon which the foundations of emancipation were solidly laid. . . Emancipation has not been wholly successful, because the experiment has not been wholly tried. But the success is none the less emphatic and decided."

Mr. Sewell says: "Every planter in Jamaica knows from his own books, if they go back far enough, that free labor is cheaper than slave labor. He knows that the cultivation of an acre of cane does not now cost him $40, when in other times it cost him $80. He knows that, under slavery, the cost of digging an acre of cane-holes was from $35 to $45, while, under freedom, it is from $8 to $15. . . The cost of labor in sugar cultivation was in Jamaica, under slavery, 4 37-100ths cents per pound, and is now, under freedom, two cents a pound. The slave, under compulsory work, produced annually 2286 lbs., while the free laborer, working only six or seven hours a day, and only 170 days out of the year, produces 2,500 lbs."

Mr. Sewell attributes the alleged "ruin" of Jamaica "to faults and errors committed by the planters themselves." He says the planters will not acknowledge it. "The mouth-pieces of the planting interest continue to-day to misrepresent the character of the negro, under the stupid belief that it will create a reäction of sympathy in favor of their party."

The fact is, the negroes now work for themselves. The women stay at home, and attend to household affairs and their children. Ask the negro why he does not work more for the planters, and his explanation is very simple: "Buckra don't pay." The negro and his family now eat the product of their own labor; they wear the comfortable dress purchased with their own money; they surround themselves with the comforts of civilized life; and they at-

tend to the concerns of their souls. They consume to a great extent what they produce. The laboring population of the island have now the comforts of life, even if the planters export less and make less money than formerly. Does it therefore follow that the island is damaged by emancipation? Ask the people of Massachusetts, if when their exports were chiefly ice and granite, they were poor because they consumed the product of their land, and purchased the produce of other lands?

In the *Missionary Herald*, published by the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, in Boston, May, 1861, is an account of a public meeting held in London, February 20th, 1861, when a deputation that had been sent to the West-Indies to ascertain the real facts respecting the result of emancipation, made their report.

They refute the statement of the London *Times* respecting the alleged extraordinary decrease of the production of sugar in Jamaica, and satisfactorily account for the apparent deterioration of the island in some respects, adding, "At the present time, however, the creoles are rapidly rising in their social and physical condition, and appropriate, to a great extent, the productions of the country to their own use." The deputation also give pleasing and satisfactory statements with respect to the general condition of the people, the property accumulated by the emancipated, their industry, religious condition, education, and morals. The report is full of interest.

After emancipation in the British West-Indies, the importations of British goods were greatly increased for the consumption of the emancipated. So, after emancipation shall have taken place in this country, the demand for our manufactures and agricultural products will likewise be greatly augmented. Four millions of new customers! and customers, too, that consume as much as white laborers!

This is a consideration worthy the attention of those at the North who take merely a commercial view of the great anticipated moral and political revolution.

In view of all that we have said, what intelligent and candid mind can fail to see and freely acknowledge that emancipation has been, in the West-Indies, an unspeakable blessing to both the white and black population? And is it not apparent that emancipation every where must be attended with similar results? Happy will it be for this country when the slaves shall be converted into freemen; happy for those who now hold them in bondage; happy for the whole South, and happy for all parts of the country! Slavery has been the bone of contention in this land for the last fifty years. It is the cause of the present unhappy condition of the country. It is its bane; while emancipation would be its antidote.

Emancipation should be effected on principles just and equitable to all concerned. The Slave States would derive more benefit from it than the free States, for, beside other advantages, it would increase the value of all the lands in the Slave States. Instead of land being worth $100 an acre on the Ohio side of the river Ohio, and similar land $10 on the Kentucky side, the land in the latter State would be of equal value with the land in the former State. It can be safely said, that after emancipation, the fee simple of the land in the Slave States would be worth a vast deal more than the present value of the land and negroes. Add to this the peace, prosperity, and amicable relations that would prevail throughout the whole country, and especially the blessing of the Almighty upon the nation, which would surely be the result, and what patriot or Christian will not labor and pray for immediate emancipation?

LEWIS TAPPAN.

61 John Street, New-York, May 23, 1861.